

Wanted: mentors to care enough after bell rings

Having heroes is an important part of growing up. Everybody at one time or another has a hero. Psychologists call them role models. Cynical adults, too often, think them silly.

Heroes, role models, call them what you may. They make lasting impressions — very often ones which endure far into adulthood.

I got to thinking about heroes the other day after being reminded of an unfortunate circumstance existing in the Farmington School District. Seems that students are having a tough time finding teachers interested enough to direct their plays.

Over at Farmington, a former student has taken up where the teachers have copped out. The Harrison Middle School, two non-faculty are directing plays.

It's really unfortunate teachers are struggling off this privilege.

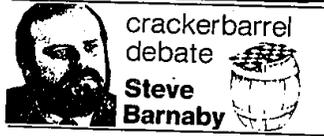
I first became aware of this situation a year or so ago when visiting one of the local high schools. Sit-

ting in the back of the auditorium I watched what was supposed to be a rehearsal. Bedlam, pure bedlam. The volunteer director, just a bit older than the students, had little control over his charges. Like teenagers will, they were trying very hard to organize and make progress. They also were failing miserably. No heroes were present.

THE INTENDED role models (educators) were long gone, off to wherever teachers go when they leave a school building.

Ever since, that scene has bothered me. Just couldn't get the picture out of my mind — teachers and administrators dashing for the parking lot while students stayed behind to try and teach themselves.

Admittedly, I've a special bias when it comes to drama and speech classes. Through the years, I spent a lot of time on both — thanks to a teacher who, even though I didn't know it at the time, was a very important role model in my life.



crackerbarrel debate
Steve Barnaby

Oh no, he wasn't your typical movie star-type hero. Actually, I thought he was kind of a nerd at the time. He was the antithesis of what I thought was "cool." Remember "cool?" He had a brusque, wore baggie suits and extra-wide wing tip shoes. Definitely an uncool looking character in the early '60s.

Above all, he was a teacher. And in the crowd I hung with, teachers were flat out... well, you know

how kids describe people who are different.

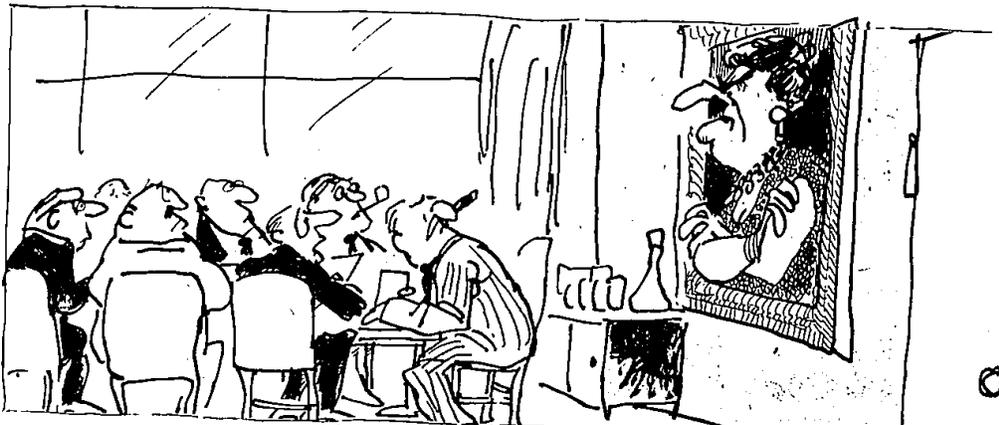
Looking back, I realize he thought I was pretty uncool, myself — punk kid with long sideburns and black motorcycle boots. The inspiration for taking his speech class was spawned by the enrollment in it of one Maria Somebody-Or-Other. Funny thing, I've forgotten the beautiful girl's last name. But I remember the teacher.

He took me in tow — low-key tough guy that he was. Put me to the challenge and got me involved — not only in speech, but broadcasting. Oh yeah, he directed the school plays, too. As much as I hated to admit it at the time, I was maturing with the help of this very uncool person. I also was spending less time out on the street.

He's out there today, doing the same things for other punk kids so they have a chance to grow into productive members of society. He cared enough to stay after school.

Too bad more like him aren't around.

Breaking up the good ol' boys club



OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC PAPERS



Bob Wisler

Oakland's jobs effort needs unity

THE PROSPECT of using \$200 million in federal funds to retrain the state's jobless for new occupations is encouraging.

Michigan, with an unemployment rate which hovers around 17 percent, sorely needs help in alleviating unemployment.

The funds are slated to be distributed in Michigan in October through the federal Job Training and Education Act (JTPA). The act was passed by Congress with the intent of providing the kind of training which will enable workers to learn new skills for new careers, in contrast to the last federal job program — CETA — which did little more than provide temporary employment.

The state will be responsible for an equitable distribution of funds throughout Michigan and for the development of local programs. Gov. James Blanchard has appointed a committee of 50 business, industry, civic and government leaders to make recommendations so that the programs will be as equitable, efficient and meaningful as possible.

YET WITH all the good news, there is a clear and present danger that provincialism, factionalism and political considerations will play a part in deliberations over distribution of the JTPA funds.

Traditionally and logically, the county, as a political subdivision of the state, would coordinate the training programs in a county. In Oakland County, however, there is already disagreement over whether there should be a countywide and county-administered program or whether Pontiac and the communities surrounding it should have a separate program.

State Sen. Philip Mastin, D-Pontiac, says that Pontiac, Waterford Township, Pontiac Township, Independence Township and Lake Orion with "40 percent of the county's unemployed" have been hit hardest by auto layoffs and economic decline.

Mastin fears that, in a county-run program, the areas he represents would fail to get sufficient training to deal with the number of unemployed. County Executive Dan Murphy, a Republican, disputes this, saying the county has done well running job programs with Pontiac receiving 35 percent of the benefits.

IN THIS CASE, it would seem that traditional partisan maneuvering is much too evident and premature. Mastin, who ran against Murphy for county executive in 1976, claims that county bureaucracy will work against Pontiac and the other communities.

Yet the record of county administration under Murphy has been excellent. There is good reason to believe county government can ably and fairly administer a program that will focus on the Pontiac area. There is no organization in Pontiac or the other areas which has a similar record of excellent administration.

There is also the danger that allowing one faction to control the lion's share of the county training funds will result in undiscovered, weak and ineffective efforts in the other areas of the county. Can we be sure that with fractionalized programs, there will be two, three or four equally strong programs? Probably not.

For the good of the entire county and those residents who are on the unemployment rolls, the politicians of Oakland County should get together to ensure that there is as little strife and division as possible and that there will be a strong, coordinated program in Oakland County.

All-male board isn't good business

THE NEWS conference was over. The folks who bring us "eyewitness" news and "action" news on TV had taken their footage off Chairman W. Michael Blumenthal lighting up his cigar, packed their gear and returned to the studios.

Then, with the reporters gone — well, all but one — the Burroughs Corp., maker of computers, began its annual stockholders meeting in Detroit. Kagan was when the fun began.

There's one in every crowd, and among the Burroughs stockholders his name was Harry Korba of Yonkers, N.Y. In his lexicon, Burroughs was "this-here company" and the plural of you was "youse."

"Youse had a director from 1975 to 1982," Korba began, noting that Martha W. Griffiths had resigned from the board when she was elected lieutenant governor of Michigan.

He noted that she was replaced by a fine gentleman by the name of William G. Milliken, distinguished governor of Michigan for 14 years.

"I hope in the future another outstanding female is elected to this here board of directors," Korba said.

"I AGREE, Mrs. Griffiths was an outstanding director," he replied Blumenthal with a smile.

"She is by no means the last female director Burroughs will have. I hope you will be able to compliment us next year."

Blumenthal knows he will have to make good on that implied promise because Korba, who acquired



Tim Richard

his 100 shares in November of 1982, promised to attend all future stockholders' meetings. Since Korba appeared to be in his 40s and in good health, we may assume we will see him again in 1984.

The stockholders dutifully cast their ballots for the 11 males from age 44 to 67 who had been duly placed on the state by the board's nominating committee.

That nominating committee includes: Blumenthal, 57, board chairman since leaving the Carter Cabinet as Treasury secretary; Charles F. Barber, 66, retired chairman of ASARCO Inc.; Alan E. Schwartz, 57, senior partner in the Detroit law firm of Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn; Arthur R. Seder Jr., 62, chairman and CEO of American Natural Resources Co. and Harold T. Shapiro, 47, economist and president of the University of Michigan.

THE IRONY of the tale is that the stockholders were shown a quarter-hour film on Burroughs products in which, by my rough estimate, 40 percent of the persons shown were women.

Almost all the persons working at video display terminals were women. Many of the unnamed customers were women. Some of the Burroughs spokespersons were women.

Yet in picking a board of directors, the board's nominating committee could come up only with 11 men.

Our U.S. Senate has three women members; our Michigan Senate, two; our state House, 13; our county boards, community college boards, city councils, school boards and township boards all have women members; the Oakland Community College board, among a few others, even has a female majority.

Corporate America ought to learn the same lesson. Of the corporate annual reports I receive, fully half indicate no women on the board of directors.

I know of a textile company with many women employees and a hefty majority of women customers which deigns not to have a woman on the board of directors. As I write, I am looking at the report of a brewing company which displays scenes from its TV commercials, and one shows a woman making the Blatz taste test — but nary a woman on the board.

When I read reports and proxy statements like that, I get the extremely uncomfortable feeling that corporate America is overlooking the talents of about half the total population, one-third of the working population and a majority of the buying population. And it isn't good business.

You need experience to get work

JOBS — PERHAPS nothing is more important in life in 1983.

Approximately 10 million persons in this nation are looking for jobs. It has been estimated that another 10 million persons are worried about losing their jobs.

So when Oakland Community College recently held a career day at the Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills, interest was high. More than 100 students plus residents of the area attended.

"We've never sponsored an event where we had so much response," said Mary McCallum, OCC's placement coordinator.

The conference focused on careers in communications. But much of the advice applied to any employment field.

The highlight was a panel discussion conducted by professionals. In addition, there were also workshops on resume writing and wardrobe.



Nick Sharkey

(Channel 20), told of his many volunteer efforts before landing a paying job. Even now he works part-time for the Michigan Department of Mental Health to supplement his income.

Tom Bjorkland, general manager of MetroVision cable television, said volunteer jobs are available for those interested in getting started in cable.

"Someone who came to my office, volunteered to help and didn't get in the way could learn about the printing business," said Paul Smith, owner of Letter Graphics of Detroit.

Students were urged to use intern programs where they receive college credit while working part-time.

Professionals also stressed personal contacts. Dzenswags said he traveled coast to coast and

knocked on hundreds of doors before finding a job. They disagreed on the importance of resumes. Smith said that an attractively designed, typeset resume attracts the attention of potential employers.

"I must have papered a good part of this country with my resume, and it didn't help at all," said Dzenswags.

ONE MAN from the audience said he was 35 years old, had a wife and three children to support, and wanted to change jobs. "How can I follow your advice of taking volunteer work?" he asked.

He got little sympathy from the professionals.

"I was 30 years old when I decided to change jobs," said Michael DiLaura, assistant personnel director at WXVZ (Channel 7). "It meant that I had to do volunteer work at night and on weekends, when I was not working my regular job. But I finally got the opening I wanted."

Several employers said a person wishing to make a career change is not hurt by age.

"I prefer to hire someone who is a little older," Smith said. "They are a little more mature and can handle a crisis better."